



Young House Family Services

'The person who in my name welcomes this child, welcomes Me...' Luke 9:48

Thank you all for this opportunity to visit with you today.

I am Shauna Freitag, Executive Director of Young House Family Services located in Burlington, Iowa. We serve approximately 4000 children and their families each year through a variety of programs and services, including pediatric integrated health home services.

On Thursday, December 7th our organization received an unanticipated call from a United Healthcare representative. The representative explained to our Integrated Health Home Program Director, Heather Brueck that she was directed to read us a statement over the phone. That statement identified that more than 100 of the children who we previously served through Ameri-health would no longer be receiving Integrated Health Home services through our organization. According to the representative this decision was effective December 1st and those previous Ameri-health clients would now receive case coordination through their ACO/primary care physicians.

When our Program Director attempted to ask for clarification and questions about being reimbursed for services provided to these families December 1st through December 7th, the United Healthcare representative said she was not allowed to answer any questions but instead, was directed to merely re-read us the previous statement. When we asked about the other hundreds of United healthcare clients and whether they would continue receiving integrated health home services with our organization, we were once again re-read the statement.

As of December 15th, our organization had yet to receive anything in writing from United Healthcare or the state of Iowa in regards to the sudden and shocking news shared with us via a phone conversation. As the Executive Director, I have made numerous attempts to get clarification and answers to our questions about payment of services, the mere future of our integrated health home services but most importantly, how our families will be notified that they no longer have a nurse, a case coordinator or peer support person working locally on their behalf, advocating for them or helping them coordinate services and available resources. Additionally, I have several staff members wondering if based off of that phone call and verbal statement, whether they are going to lose their jobs merely a week before Christmas or shortly thereafter.

Today, I would ask the state and United Healthcare to seriously consider the impact such a phone call has on providers, children and their families. As a provider, this decision has a major impact on our small rural southeast Iowa organization. The un-enrollment of merely 100 Amerihealth children from our Pediatric Integrated Health Home program is approximately \$124,000 in lost funding. Despite this, our organization has made a commitment to the children and families we serve and will continue to provide IHH services until we are notified in writing of their official disenrollment.



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On behalf of child welfare providers across the state and the children and families served through our pediatric integrated health home program, I ask that the decision to suddenly cut services and IHH programming be reconsidered. At minimum, please properly notify the children and families of changes to their services in advance, with transparency and in writing.

Furthermore, I would like to address several of the comments made by MCO representatives today. I would like to add that our IHH program has had exceptional outcomes for children and families. We have yet to be informed that we are "out of compliance," nor have we been informed by any MCO that we are not meeting and fulfilling our contracts and expectations. Our IHH staff attend school staffings, court hearings, help children obtain beds and coordinate services to rid homes of bed bug infestations. IHH services are so much more than an appointment reminder or call center. Integrated Health Home services are not an administrative service.

Thank you again for your time here today.

Respectfully,

Shauna J. Freitag, MSW
Executive Director
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